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NSC BRIEFING

3 December 1953

JACQUET'S STATEMENT AND
VIETNAMESE REACTION

- I. First reaction from responsible French official was from Marc Jacquet, Secretary of State for the Associated States in Paris.
 - A. He said Ho's reply was "news of world importance"; declared France would not refuse to negotiate.
 - B. Rejected newspaper interview as point of departure but observed that official channels were open to Ho.
 - C. French Government statement shortly afterward merely stated that Jacquet's views were not "official."
- II. Bao Dai, who had at first taken Ho "offer" in stride, greatly disturbed by Jacquet's statement

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- A. Regarded it as real indication that France might actually negotiate.
 - 1. Had viewed earlier French references to desirability of negotiations as made for benefit of French public and Assembly.
- B. Said if French reached an armistice he would go into exile and hope to reconquer Vietnam from without.
- C. Said if Ho had addressed himself to his government, as he should have, the reply would have been: Good, just lay down your arms and we'll negotiate a surrender.

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III. Official statement of French Government,
issued last night, said: "Viet Minh has
a right to make its position known by means
of an official declaration. In accordance
with the Associated States, ... it would
be examined with the wish to do everything
to re-establish a durable peace assuring
the independence of the Associated States
as well as the liberty of its citizens."

A. Bao Dai's deputy in Paris yesterday

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[REDACTED] if France
wants to open negotiations as a
deliberate delaying tactic and to
appease certain elements in France,
Vietnam would go along.

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- B. If negotiations are opened with a view to early French withdrawal, Vietnam would have to seek assistance elsewhere, with Formosa, South Korea, US, with view to continuing anti-Communist struggle.
- C. All leaders on Bao Dai ~~his~~ side regard an armistice now as surrender to Viet Minh.
- D. This attitude will put strong barrier in the way of any actual negotiations.

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